

In his famous mu'allaqah poem, the Jahili poet 'Amr Ibn Kulthum said, "And we had many glorious and long days, we defied the king therein, lest we obey." The word he used for "we obey" is "nadin," from the well-known but oft-misunderstood root word "din." Usually translated as "religion," and indeed it is that, one of the basic meanings of din is obedience, and is especially used – as in the above verse of poetry – in reference to the authority and rule of a king.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said in the story of Yusuf (عليه و سلم),

"Thus We plotted for Yusuf. He would not take his brother by the din of the king"
(Surah Yusuf 12:76),

Meaning, "by the rule and authority of the king," or as at-Tabari commented, "Yusuf would not take his brother by the rule, judgment, or obedience of the king of Egypt." He then mentioned the various statements of the Salaf suggesting that "din" in this ayah means sultan (authority), qada (judgment), and hukm (rule), ending his commentary by saying, "And the basis of din is obedience."

As for our King – the King of mankind, the King of the Day of Recompense, the True King (سبحانه وتعالى) – then we have entered into His din and must obey His rule wholeheartedly, and

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

"And fight them until there is no fitnah and the din is for Allah. But if they cease, then there is no aggression except against the tyrants"
(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:193).

So the command of Allah – to which obedience is due as a religious duty – is to fight until there is no fitnah, i.e. evident shirk in the obedience of Allah, and until no manifest authority is given to any rule except to that of the True King. His saying, "if they cease," means that if they submit or surrender, then they are to be left alone. This can either be in the form of repentance to Allah and abiding by His worship alone or by the paying of jizyah while remaining upon subjugated kufr, just as Allah said, regarding the command of killing the mushrikin in general.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

"Then if they repent, establish the prayer, and pay the zakah, then leave them alone"
(Surah At-Tawbah 9:5)

And He said that the People of the Book – those who "do not adhere to the true din" – should specifically be fought.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

"Until they pay the jizyah willingly, while they are humiliated"
(Surah At-Tawbah 9:29).

And "there is no aggression except against the tyrants" means those who did not submit nor surrender, either through repentance or dhimmah, the covenant of jizyah.

Thus, anyone who is neither a Muslim nor a dhimmi kafir (while still a tyrant against himself, deserving both hatred and humiliation) is a hostile tyrant deserving aggression. This is because shirk itself is dhulm (tyranny).

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

"And when Luqman said to his son, admonishing him, 'O my son, do not commit shirk with Allah. Verily shirk is a great tyranny'"
(Surah Luqman 31:13)

And although the people of dhimmah are mushrikin from the People of the Book, their shirk is subjugated and humiliated under the Shari'ah of Allah enforced upon them.

So the duty to fight the tyrants – the mushrikin – is clear and established.
But Allah did not only command the "fighting" of disbelievers, as if to say He only wants us to conduct frontline operations against them. Rather, He has also ordered that they be slain wherever they may be – on or off the battlefield.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

"So when the sacred months have passed, then kill the mushrikin wherever you find them and take them, surround them, and wait for them at every outpost"
(Surah At-Tawbah 9:5)

All of this becomes all the more apparent for those who have realized that the blood of a kafir is cheap, filthy, and permissible to shed.

Islam is the religion of sound principles providing the perfect foundations upon which the solid structures of justice and glory are built. One of these great principles is that all people must be fought until they accept Islam or come under a shar'i covenant. This principle establishes the prohibition of shedding Muslim and covenant-bound kafir blood as well as the permissibility of shedding the blood of all other kuffar.

Narrated by Ibn Umar (رضي الله عنه) that,

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said,

“I have been ordered to fight mankind until they say that there is no god except Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah, and they establish the prayer and pay the zakah. Whoever does so, then his blood and wealth are safe from me except for a lawful reason”
(Bukhari and Muslim)

Narrated by Abu Bakrah (رضي الله عنه) that,

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said, addressing the Muslims,

“For verily your blood, wealth, and honor are haram to each other”
(Bukhari and Muslim)

And regarding the dhimmi – the one who has a covenant with the Muslims

Narrated by ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) that,

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said,

“Whoever kills a person of covenant shall not smell the fragrance of Jannah, which can be found for a distance of forty years”
(Bukhari and Muslim)

These narrations offer an explanation of the ayah.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

“And do not kill a soul which Allah has forbidden except for a lawful reason”
(Surah Al-An’am 6:151)

At-Tabari (رحيم الله) commented on the above verse,

"The soul which Allah has forbidden is the soul of a believer or a person of covenant, and His saying, 'except for a lawful reason,' means that which permits such a soul to be killed, as in capital punishment for murder, or stoning an adulterer to death, or killing someone for apostasy."
(Tafseer At Tabari)

As for all others – meaning all disbelievers who have no covenant – then their blood has not been given the sanctity of prohibition, but remains under the command to fight mankind, so their blood remains halal. Shedding the blood of a non-dhimmi kafir is not sinful, but is rather rewarded with Jannah.

Narrated by Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that,

Allah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said,

"A kafir and his killer will never be gathered together in the Fire"
(Saheeh Muslim)

Furthermore, his words,

"I have been ordered to fight mankind,"

Leave no room for debate, as mankind includes every person in the world, and the only ones excluded from this order to fight are those who submit or surrender to the rule of Islam, as was previously mentioned. This alone befits a messenger who was sent to all people.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

"Say, 'O mankind, verily I am the Messenger of Allah sent to all of you'"
(Al-A'raf 7:158)

Narrated by Jabir Ibn ‘Abdillah (رضي الله عنه) that,

Allah’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said,

“Other prophets were sent to their people alone, but I was sent to all of mankind”
(Bukhari)

Lest someone think this is a strange, new opinion, it should be known that this is the stance of the Sahabah and the greatest scholars of the Ummah.

Narrated by Al-Miswar Ibn Makhramah (رضي الله عنه) that,

This is reflected in the words of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab who, during the life of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) and without objection, said to Abu Jandal, encouraging him to kill his father Suhayl Ibn ‘Amr, “Be patient, Abu Jandal, for they are merely mushrikin, and their Blood is nothing but (like) the blood of a dog”
(Ahmad)

Indeed, ‘Umar was correct, as the mushrikin are entirely impure.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

“O you who believe! The mushrikin are nothing but impure”
(Surah At-Tawbah 9:28)

Narrated by Maymum Ibn Siyah (رضي الله عنه) that,

This is also understood from the words of Anas Ibn Malik, who was asked, “O Abu Hamzah! What makes a slave’s (i.e. a person’s) blood and wealth haram?” He replied, “Whoever testifies that there is no god but Allah, faces our qiblah, prays our prayer, and eats what we slaughter, then he is a Muslim. He gets what a Muslim gets and is bound by what a Muslim is bound”
(Bukhari)

Ash-Shafi'i (رحيم الله) said:

"And the kafir's blood is not spared until he becomes a Muslim"
(Al-Umm).

In further explanation, Ash-Shafi'i (رحيم الله) said:

"Allah spared blood and restricted the taking of wealth, except for a lawful reason, through belief in Allah and in His Messenger or through a covenant given by the believers, based on the rule of Allah and His Messenger, to the People of the Book. And He allowed shedding the blood of mature men who refrain from belief and who do not have a covenant.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said,

'So when the sacred months have passed, then kill the mushrikin wherever you find them and take them, surround them, and wait for them at every outpost'
(Surah At-Tawbah 9:5)"
(Al-Umm)

Mentioning the exception of killing women and children,

Ash-Shafi'i (رحيم الله) also said:

"And the reason for the prohibition of shedding Muslim blood being different from the prohibition of shedding the kafir child's an kafir woman's blood is that they are not to be killed due to specific revelation restricting this killing [while the initial ruling allows shedding kafir blood in general]. And our opinion regarding this – and Allah knows best – is that the restriction exists so that they can become slaves, which is more beneficial than killing them, and killing them does not harm the enemy; so making them slaves is more optimal than killing them"
(Al-Umm)

Al-Khattabi (رحيم الله) said,

“The kafir’s blood is permissible because he has not yet uttered the word of tawhid; but if he were to say it, then his blood is spared and becomes prohibited”
(A’lam al-Hadith)

Ibn Hazm (رحيم الله), after mentioning the prohibition of targeting women and children, said,

“And it is permissible to kill anyone – other than those we mentioned above – of the mushrikin, both the combatant and non-combatant, the businessman and employee, the elderly man – whether or not he be a person of influence – the farmer, the bishop or priest or monk, the blind or crippled – no one is given exception”
(Al-Muhalla)

Ibn Qudamah (رحيم الله) mentioned the harbi (the kafir who is not under a covenant) and said,

“Shedding his blood is permissible without exception, just like swine”
(Al-Mughni)

Ibn Qudamah (رحيم الله) also said,

“The kuffar asliyyin [those kuffar who are not murtaddin] shall have no protection in their own lands”
(Al-Mughni)

Ibn Rushd (رحيم الله) said,

“And the principle is that what makes wealth permissible to take is kufr, and that which protects it is Islam, just as the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said,
‘Then if they said that, they have protected their blood and their wealth from me’”
(Bidayat al-Mujtahid)

While specifically mentioning wealth, his words clearly point to the permissibility of bloodshed as is also in the evidence he quoted.

Al-Qurtubi (رحيم الله) said,

"If a Muslim meets a kafir who has no covenant, it is permissible for him to kill him."

Abu Hanifah (رحيم الله) said, regarding a kafir who is killed,

"There is no retaliation (against the killer) and the diyah (blood money) is not to be paid, because the blood of the kafir is permissible (to shed) unless it is established that he has a covenant or is under dhimmah"
(Al-Hawi al-Kabir)

Likewise, the famous Hanafi scholar al-Kashani (رحيم الله) said,

"The principle is that it is permissible to kill anyone from amongst the people who are at war (with the Muslims), whether they fight or do not fight. But it is not permissible to kill anyone who is not from the people who are at war [meaning those with a valid covenant], unless they fight or offer strategic support, obedience, instigation, or otherwise. So the priest and wandering ascetic who mix with the people are to be killed, as are those who have fits of insanity, and the deaf and mute, and the one with a severed hand or foot, even if they did not fight. This is because they are from the same people who are at war [with the Muslims]"
(Badai' as-Sanai')

None of this should be surprising to any Muslim who has studied his religion, as this matter of a kafir's blood being halal to shed is something upon which scholars have recorded consensus.

At-Tabari (رحيم الله) said,

“They [the scholars of Islam] have agreed that even if a mushrik were to wear the bark of all the trees of the Haram [in Makkah] around his neck and on his arms, that would not grant him safety from being killed unless the Muslims gave him a covenant of dhimmah or security.”

Muslims currently living in Dar al-Kufr must be reminded that the blood of the disbelievers is halal, and killing them is a form of worship to Allah, the Lord, King, and God of mankind. This includes the businessman riding to work in a taxicab, the young adults (post-pubescent “children”) engaged in sports activities in the park, and the old man waiting in line to buy a sandwich. Indeed, even the blood of the kafir street vendor selling flowers to those passing by is halal to shed – and striking terror into the hearts of all disbelievers is a Muslim’s duty. There is no shar’I requirement to target soldiers and policemen nor judges and politicians, but all kuffar who are not under the covenant of dhimmah are fair game. How can the disbelievers ever dream of safety and security while Muslims suffer anywhere in the world and while the rule of Allah is mockingly replaced by manmade monstrosities of democracy?